

**Statement of the Honorable John Boehner
Before the
Committee on House Administration
March 1, 2001**

Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to be back today among colleagues at the Committee on House Administration, though in a different role from that of past Congresses. As Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I am proud to submit a budget request that is fiscally responsible. At the same time, our request recognizes the Committee's legislative and oversight responsibilities at a time when issues within our jurisdiction are in the forefront of the Congressional agenda.

My friend and colleague George Miller, who is the Senior Democrat on our Committee, has been an integral part of the budget development. As a former Member of House Administration, I am pleased to report that our proposed budget meets the goal of providing one-third of the funding and staffing to the Minority. I would also like to point out, Mr. Chairman, that the Minority controls its own budget.

Further, Mr. Miller and I have made the decision to have our information technology staffs become shared employees so they may work for both sides of the Committee. This cooperation will ensure that both Majority and Minority keep up with technological advances. The Committee did without many needed equipment and software replacements in the last Congress to focus resources for technological updates in the main hearing room. Both sides need significant upgrades in equipment, and we have included a request for an emergency supplemental allocation to handle our most critical technological needs. We must enhance our maintenance capabilities for existing equipment, as well as continue with regular upgrades in both equipment and software.

Mr. Chairman, this year we are challenged with a new President who views our educational jurisdiction as a national priority. We need the resources to ensure that his vision receives thorough review.

The budget we are submitting includes increases for field hearings. We have already held one in Florida and another in Georgia on the Bush education agenda. Tomorrow, we will be in Chicago. As you know, one of the Speaker's goals is for committees and Members to understand the real life experiences of those whose lives would be affected by legislation we consider. Right now, our Committee's focus is on needed reforms for elementary and secondary education. I know that we will be devoting similar intense scrutiny to health care, pension reform, and other issues that are within our jurisdiction.

And, while we have eliminated a freestanding subcommittee devoted to oversight, our commitment to oversight has not decreased. To better coordinate oversight and legislation, I have made it clear that each legislative subcommittee is also responsible for oversight of its programs and have tasked the Vice Chairs of each subcommittee with driving that agenda.

Our Committee is already active, and we anticipate that the pace will only increase as the 107th Congress continues. The increase we are requesting will enable us to carryout a demanding agenda. This, in turn, will allow us to fulfill our committee responsibilities to this Congress and the American people.